



## P R E S S   R E L E A S E



**World Cheese Awards marks 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
with look ahead to next chapter in cheese**

As cheesemakers, judges and dedicated followers of the word on curd anticipate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition on the World Cheese Awards on Friday 17 November, organiser, the Guild of Fine Food, has invited some of its top judges to shine a light on the people who are set to shape the next chapter in cheese.

These 15 'big cheeses' have all put forward the names of individuals who are making their mark in the world of cheese today, including mongers, makers, farmers, affineurs, authors, consultants, educators and importers. Representing nations ranging from Belgium and the Basque Country to Mexico and South Africa, these 30 faces, 15 industry heavyweights and 15 architects of tomorrow's cheese landscape, provide a snapshot of cheese today, as the World Cheese Awards celebrates three decades at the heart of the global curd community.

With a nod to both the heritage and future of the largest cheese-only competition on the planet, many of these stars of the next chapter in cheese will be joining the judging panel for this year's event, which will form part of Taste of London Festive Edition at Tobacco Dock. With all 3,001 entries set to be judged in a single day, the serious business of tasting, nosing and grading cheeses from 35 different countries will unite the cheese world once again, as 230 experts from six continents and 29 different countries put their cheese irons to work.

**Full list of nominations:**

**Ali and Jen Grimstone-Jones, Cheese Etc - The Pangbourne Cheese Shop (UK)**

"Holding together a small shop in a small town, with a fearless 100 cheeses on their deli, Ali and Jen combine old fashioned over the counter friendliness with new-fangled social media and reaching out to their local community. We need more Jen and Alis in this world."

**Nominated by Charlie Turnbull, School of Fine Food instructor and owner of Turnbulls Deli (UK)**

**Alison French, Chalke Valley Cheese (UK)**

“Starting up in 2012, Alison is already producing five outstanding unpasteurised cheeses, all from a single herd of Holstein/Friesian cows. When visiting, I was so impressed by her dedication, skill, modesty and commitment to quality. This is local artisan cheesemaking at its very best.”

**Nominated by Karen Barnes, editor at delicious. magazine (UK)**

**Andy and Mateo Kehler, Jasper Hill Farm (USA)**

“Harbison from Jasper Hill Farm truly is one of a kind, unique, with a floral and mushroomy aroma, followed by the creaminess, texture, taste, aftertaste... It also brings me to this new trend of just sitting with good cheese, good wine and good company. This is one of the best features of this kind of cheese, the intensity limits the amount you take, but you keep going back to have yet another bite.”

**Nominated by Catherine Fogel, purchasing director for C & E Gastro-Import (Denmark)**

**Bronwen Percival, author, cheese buyer at Neal's Yard Dairy and co-founder of [MicrobialFoods.Org](http://MicrobialFoods.Org) (UK)**

“Percival is in the vanguard of a crusade to reintroduce cheeses made without added cultures, a revolution on a par with the natural wine movement. It brings welcome diversity, and fresh thinking, to the cheese world, along with a new, unique, flavour of place.”

**Nominated by Xanthe Clay, The Telegraph (UK)**

**Jennifer Kast, co-founder of the [MilkJam](http://MilkJam) Cheesemaking Educational Group (UK)**

“Making a real effort to unpick what traditional cheese making is in the UK, Jennifer has set up a programme to examine in depth each territorial type, starter usage and making, milk types and traditional historic recipes, through her yearly educational seminars and hands on cheesemaking classes for those working in the industry, MilkJam.”

**Nominated by Andy Swinscoe, owner of The Courtyard Dairy (UK)**

**Jonny Crickmore, Fen Farm Dairy (UK)**

“Jonny, along with his wife Dulcie, is a huge champion of the use of raw milk, turning it into the award-winning Baron Bigod, as well as butter. He has integrated himself very quickly into the British cheese world and is now on the committee and helping others. UK cheese needs committed and passionate people like this.”

**Nominated by Rhuaridh Buchanan, owner of Buchanan's Cheesemonger (UK)**

**Laurens De Middeleer, Schapenmelkerij Bosschelle (Belgium)**

“Laurens built his sheep shed with his own hands at the early age of 18, started production in 2015 and is already producing some much-revered cheese. At 23, there’s no one better to represent the future of cheese making!”

**Nominated by Regula Ysewijn, food writer and presenter (Belgium)**

**Nathan and Padgett Arnold, Sequatchie Cove Creamery (USA)**

“Nathan and Padgett Arnold produce amazing unpasteurized cheese and are committed to bringing back a focus on the products uniquely representing the land of the Appalachian Mountains. Partnering with herd owners and supporting land management and renewable energy initiatives, they have great passion, vision and dreams for an agricultural model that will work in this environment.”

**Nominated by Cathy Strange, global executive coordinator for Whole Foods Market (USA)**

**Pascal Beillevaire, Fromagerie Beillevaire (France)**

“This farmer’s son, who began from nothing, is today at the head of a magnificent business with 200 employees and 45 sales outlets. As with the shops, this man has a certain character and collects the best cheeses from 200 small producers in each region. My friend Pascal knows them all.”

**Nominated by Roland Barthélemy, president of the Guilde des Fromagers (France)**

**Paul Thomas, dairy consultant, author and director of the Academy of Cheese (UK)**

“Providing the knowledge artisan cheesemakers need to produce world class cheese safely, Paul fills an essential gap left by the loss of Government or MMB sponsored sources of knowledge. Previously working as an affineur and cheesemaker, Paul is now a freelance technical adviser and cheesemaking instructor, as well as helping to pioneer the Academy of Cheese.”

**Nominated by Mary Quicke, Quicke’s (UK)**

**Peio Etxeleku, Agour Dairy (Basque)**

“Peio is a second-generation cheesemaker, but is also an innovator and is demonstrating his great talent with more versions of the traditional Ossau-Iraty PDO. Proud of his region and a defender of its traditions, culture and local language, Peio is always ready to tell the beautiful story about the life of cheese.”

**Nominated by Victoria Urresti, technical expert of the tasting committee for the PDO Idiazabel Cheese and member of Artzai Gazta’s technical committee (Basque)**

**Phillip Stansfield, Cornish Cheese Co. (UK)**

“To me, Phil has personified the last 30 years of emerging cheesemakers. After he retired from rugby and diversified into cheese making because he couldn’t get enough money for his milk, he has gone onto pioneer a British version of a softer, creamy blue, won World Champion Cheese in 2010 and is still tending his cows and making cheese. A true cheese entrepreneur.”

**Nominated by Bob Farrand, chairman of the Guild of Fine Food and founder of the World Cheese Awards (UK)**

**Rina and Norman Belcher, Belnori Boutique Cheesery (South Africa)**

“This husband and wife team started in 2003 with a black enamel saucepan, stainless bucket and the milk of four does. With determination, passion, teamwork and excellent management, they have gone onto win numerous awards, including Best South African Cheese at the World Cheese Awards 2016.”

**Nominated by Kobus Mulder, dairy industry consultant (South Africa)**

**Sam Frank, Jumi Cheese (USA)**

“Starting as a cheesemaking apprentice and then cave manager, Sam has researched cheesemaking with the milk of heritage breed animals and presented his findings to the American Cheese Society. A representative of Jumi Cheese in the US, Sam is a cheesemaker, affineur, monger, and now importer, a clear example of the great talent and expertise in our industry.”

**Nominated by Carlos Yescas, cheesemonger and author (Mexico)**

**Tom and Clare Noblet, Whin Yeats Dairy (UK)**

“British territorial cheeses have had a rough ride, so I was delighted to discover a cloth-bound Wensleydale-style cheese called Fellstone. Tom and Clare are doing all the right things. They only have around 80 cows on their 250-acre upland hill farm, and the cheese is made with raw milk, animal rennet and a recipe that pre-dates World War Two. Most importantly, the cheeses are delicious.”

**Nominated by Patrick McGuigan, food journalist and cheese writer (UK)**

**The World Cheese Awards will take place on Friday 17 November at Taste of London Festive Edition, which will run from 16-19 November at Tobacco Dock, London.**

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### **World Cheese Awards**

A firm date in every cheese lover's calendar, the World Cheese Awards has been bringing together cheesemakers, retailers, buyers, consumers and food commentators worldwide for three decades, in a celebration of tradition, innovation and excellence in cheese. It's the biggest cheese event in the world, attracting over 3,000 entries in 2016 alone from 30 different countries, which were judged by 266 experts from every corner of the globe.

Judges work in teams of four, identifying any cheeses worthy of a bronze, silver or gold award. They look at the rind and the body of the cheese, its colour, texture, consistency and, above all, its taste. Each team then nominates one exceptional cheese as the Super Gold from their table. These 66 cheeses are the best in the world and are judged a second time by the Super Jury of 16 internationally recognised experts, who each select a cheese to champion in the final round of judging. The Super Jury, representing all four corners of the globe, then debates the final 16 in front of a live consumer and trade audience, before choosing the World Champion Cheese live on WCA TV.

### **Taste Festivals**

Taste Festivals will be hosting 20 restaurant festivals in 2017, setting a new benchmark for food and drink events worldwide. Taste Festivals is owned by IMG Culinary, a division of the Events and Federations business unit of IMG Worldwide, the global sports, fashion and media company. All information is correct as of the time of release.

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